

AMENDMENTS TO THE CLAIMS

This listing of claims will replace all prior versions and listings of claims in the application:

LISTING OF CLAIMS:

1. (currently amended): A fat for producing confectionery which comprises at least one organic acid selected from the group consisting of ascorbic acid, erythorbic acid, lactic acid, tartaric acid, citric acid and malic acid, wherein the organic acid is contained in an amount of 60 ppm or less,

wherein said fat is produced by a process which comprises the steps of: adding a solution of the at least one organic acid to the fat for confectionery production or a part fat thereof and drying the resulting mixture under heating and reduced pressure, wherein the drying and removal of solvent from the solution are carried out while stirring under conditions of a temperature of from 70 to 180°C and a vacuum degree of from 0.5 to 100 Torr.

2. (original): A fat for producing confectionery as claimed in claim 1, wherein the organic acid is contained in an amount of from 2 to 60 ppm.

3. (original): A fat for producing confectionery as claimed in claim 2, wherein the organic acid is contained in an amount of from 29 to 60 ppm.

4. (original): A fat for producing confectionery as claimed in claim 1, wherein the fat is hard butter.

5. (original): A process for producing a fat for confectionery production, which comprises steps of: adding a solution of at least one organic acid selected from the group consisting of ascorbic acid, erythorbic acid, lactic acid, tartaric acid, citric acid and malic acid to

a fat for confectionery production or a part fat thereof, and drying the resulting mixture under heating and a reduced pressure.

6. (original): A process for producing a fat for confectionery production as claimed in claim 5, wherein the organic acid is contained in an amount of from 2 to 60 ppm.

7.. (original): A process for producing a fat for confectionery production as claimed in claim 6, wherein the organic acid is contained in an amount of from 29 to 60 ppm.

8. (currently amended): A process for producing a fat for confectionery production as claimed in claim 5, wherein the drying and removal of the solvent from the solution are carried out while stirring under conditions of a temperature of from 50 to 180°C and a vacuum degree of from 0.5 to 100 Torr.

9. (original): A process for producing a fat for confectionery production as claimed in claim 5, wherein the fat is hard butter.

10. (currently amended): A product using a fat for confectionery production comprising at least one organic acid selected from the group consisting of ascorbic acid, erythorbic acid, lactic acid, tartaric acid, citric acid and malic acid, wherein the organic acid is contained in an amount of 60 ppm or less,

wherein said fat is produced by a process which comprises the steps of: adding a solution of the at least one organic acid to the fat for confectionery production for a part fat thereof and drying the resulting mixture under heating and reduced pressure, wherein the drying and removal of solvent from the solution are carried out while stirring under conditions of a temperature of from 70 to 180°C and a vacuum degree of from 0.5 to 100 Torr.

11. (original): A product using a fat for confectionery production as claimed in claim 10, wherein the product using a fat for confectionery production is chocolate.

12. (original): A product using a fat for confectionery production as claimed in claim 10, wherein the product using a fat for confectionery production is white chocolate or milk chocolate.

13. (original): A product using a fat for confectionery production as claimed in claim 10, wherein the product using a fat for confectionery production has a fat content of 30% or more.

14. (original): A product using a fat for confectionery production as claimed in claim 10, wherein the product using a fat for confectionery production is whipped chocolate or chocolate for coating ice cream.

15. (original): A product using a fat for confectionery production as claimed in claim 10, wherein the product using a fat for confectionery production is an emulsified product.

16. (previously presented): A process for producing a fat based confectionery and an emulsified product which comprises using a fat containing at least one organic acid selected from the group consisting of ascorbic acid, erythorbic acid, lactic acid, tartaric acid, citric acid and malic acid, wherein the organic acid is contained in an amount of 60 ppm or less.

17. (original): A process for producing a fat based confectionery and an emulsified product as claimed in claim 16, wherein the emulsified product is an oil-in-water cream composition and a milk beverage using the oil-in-water cream composition.

18. (original): A process for producing a fat based confectionery and an emulsified product as claimed in claim 16, wherein the organic acid is contained in an amount of from 2 to 60 ppm.

19. (original): A process for producing a fat based confectionery and an emulsified product as claimed in claim 18, wherein the organic acid is contained in an amount of from 29 to 60 ppm.

20. (original): A process for producing a fat based confectionery and an emulsified product as claimed in claim 16, wherein the fat is hard butter.

21. (previously presented): A process for improving fatty taste of a fat based confectionery and an emulsified product which comprises using a fat containing at least one organic acid selected from the group consisting of ascorbic acid, erythorbic acid, lactic acid, tartaric acid, citric acid and malic acid, wherein the organic acid is contained in an amount of 60 ppm or less.

22. (previously presented): A process for improving fatty taste of a fat based confectionery and an emulsified product as claimed in claim 21, wherein the emulsified product is an oil-in-water cream composition and a milk beverage using the oil-in-water cream composition, wherein the organic acid is contained in an amount of 60 ppm or less.

23. (original): A process for improving fatty taste of a fat based confectionery and an emulsified product as claimed in claim 21, wherein the organic acid is contained in an amount of from 2 to 60 ppm.

24. (original): A process for improving fatty taste of a fat based confectionery and an emulsified product as claimed in claim 23, wherein the organic acid is contained in an amount of from 29 to 60 ppm.

25. (original): A process for improving fatty taste of a fat based confectionery and an emulsified product as claimed in claim 21, wherein the fat is hard butter.